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THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS PARTICIPATION IN NATO PROGRAMME “PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE” (1995–2016)

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The present article is devoted to the analysis of Belarus – NATO relations in the context of instability and turbulence of regional security. The author came to the conclusion that the main actors from the Belarusian side formulating the framework of Belarus – NATO interaction are the State Secretariat of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Belarus, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus. Moreover, the major directions of Belarus – NATO relations are Individual partnership programme elaborated for two years within Partnership for peace programme, Partnership for peace planning and review process. The author evaluates the effectiveness of Individual partnership programme via demonstration of case studies and results of certain directions.

Keywords: NATO; Belarus – NATO relations; Belarusian foreign policy; Partnership for peace programme; regional security.

УЧАСТИЕ РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ В ПРОГРАММЕ НАТО “ПАРТНЕРСТВО РАДИ МИРА” (1995–2016)

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Анализируются отношения Беларусь – НАТО в контексте нестабильности региональной безопасности. Сделан вывод о том, что основными акторами с белорусской стороны, формирующими рамки взаимодействия Беларуси и НАТО, являются Государственный секретариат Совета Безопасности Республики Беларусь, Министерство обороны Республики Беларусь и Министерство иностранных дел Республики Беларусь. Кроме того, основными направлениями отношений Беларусь – НАТО являются взаимодействие в рамках индивидуальной программы партнерства, разрабатываемой на два года в рамках программы “Партнерство ради мира», участие в процессе планирования и оценки. Автор рассматривает эффективность реализации индивидуальной программы партнерства, ее результаты и приводит конкретные примеры по рассматриваемым вопросам.

Ключевые слова: НАТО; отношения Беларусь – НАТО; внешняя политика Беларуси; программа “Партнерство ради мира”; региональная безопасность.

Introduction

The Belarus' participation in the construction of regional security is evident and undisputable. Moreover, this process is impossible without analysing Belarus – NATO relations as these two actors in the international

arena have common borders since 1999 and 2004. Thus the goal of this article is to show how Belarus and NATO interact with each other, what mechanisms are used, who is responsible for the realisation from the Belaru-

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sian side. In other words, the objective of the article is to demonstrate the long historic and political process of establishing more or less constant cooperation between Belarus and NATO. For this reason, it is necessary to fulfill some important tasks. Firstly, to describe the fundamental grounds of the Partnership for peace programme (PfP), historical methods, and official documents used in the article by the researcher. Secondly, to consider the effectivity of certain events in the framework of the Individual partnership programme (IPP) via their case study. Thirdly, to evaluate the level of Belarus – NATO cooperation: either mutually beneficial or unilateral directive aggressive.

It goes without saying that the Belarusian issue in the NATO context is topical and great attention is paid to its studying. Frankly speaking, the international relations department at the faculty of international relations of the Belarusian State University is the major scientific academic community in the Republic of Belarus. A. Baichorov [1], A. Rozanov [2], A. Rusakovich [3], V. Shadursky [4], V. Snapkousky [5] studied problems of Belarusian foreign and security policy including aspects of Belarus – NATO interaction. There are numerous fragmentary articles devoted to NATO issues but there is no all-encompassing comprehensive work, that is why this article is an author's attempt to summarise the tendencies and case studies in Belarus' participation in the PfP. The author examined sites of NATO¹, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus², National Archive of the Republic of Belarus³. It should be noted that foreign historiography is primarily devoted to the political situation in Belarus [6], to geopolitical disputes between East and West and Belarus' place in them or to the president A. Lukashenko and his relations with a Russian colleague. That's why the author considered them useless and not presented in

the article because it lacks a useful assessment for the disclosure of the topic.

Actually, we should underline the diversity of security architecture in Europe in general and in Eastern Europe in particular. Firstly, there are different systems and regimes of security in the region: NATO, Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), EU defence and security policy, Russia – USA bilateral agreements. Of course, there are different approaches to security guarantees that trigger contradictions between regional actors. The Republic of Belarus is a member of CSTO, CIS, and Union State with the Russian Federation. But in 2015 it was underlined by the head of Belarusian state that Belarus' aspiration is to maintain and expand constructive cooperation with the NATO on the basis of equality and mutual respect [6].

Secondly, Belarus is situated in the centre of Europe and is always regarded as a buffer zone or bridge between West and East. It's self-evident that the country tends to realise the multivector foreign policy and participates in international security organisations.

Moreover, the country expresses concern about existing problems (possible cooperation between CSTO and NATO, further NATO expansion to Ukraine and Georgia, the predominant role of the USA in the alliance, destruction of the system of armaments treaties between the USA and Russian Federation) [6].

If we try to give general characteristics of Belarus – NATO relations since 1992 up to 2016 it is not surprising that we observe the uneven quality of interaction and irregular quantity of events depending on the political conjuncture at the particular moment. This political atmosphere is created at the international level: certain summits (NATO, EU, G8, G20) play an important role, bilateral agreements and meetings as well as at the national level (elections of the president, etc.).

The problem of denuclearisation and conversion

The first contacts of new sovereign state in the 1990s were primarily established with the USA in connection with denuclearisation and economic aid for the conversion of the armaments industry. We should mention the great range of high-level visits in the 1990s: it was the first visit of the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Belarus in 1993, and 6-hours' visit of the US president in Belarus in 1994; state secretary of the USA visited Belarus in 1993 and Belarusian minister of foreign affairs visited the USA in 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997⁴. There were reconnaissance visits with the slogan "come and see". At that time Belarus was

trying to diminish its dependence on Russia and was searching for ways how to get economic privileges and bonuses from other countries. During each visit to the USA, the Belarusian state was invited to join NATO PfP. To make a long story short Belarus at that time was waiting for real money from the US side and the republic did not have a unified foreign policy strategy, there was a permanent discussion between different state bodies (Supreme Council of the Republic of Belarus and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus) and political parties and even some officials (minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Belarus). That's

¹North Atlantic Treaty Organisation [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/index.htm> (date of access: 01.02.2020).

²Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. URL: https://mfa.gov.by/en_ (date of access: 01.02.2020).

³Национальный архив Республики Беларусь [Электронный ресурс]. URL: http://www.narb.by/rus/reading_room/ (дата обращения: 01.02.2020).

⁴Справочные материалы. Отношения Республики Беларусь и США // Нац. арх. Респ. Беларусь. Ф. 7. Оп. 16. Д. 3806. Л. 167.

why the country postponed PfP joining. But after the constitutional referendum in 1996, US implementation of selective engagement policy in 1997, the diplomatic scandal “Drozdy” in 1998 USA – Belarus interstate co-operation decreased and the bilateral interaction fell into oblivion for a decade. The United States has always respected Belarus’ desire to chart its own course and

to contribute to peace and stability in the region. Both sides confirmed willingness to continue dialogue on regional and international security matters. The USA highly appreciated Belarusian efforts to preserve peace in the region. Summing it up, against the background of tensions with the Russian Federation the Republic of Belarus is turning to Western partners.

Partnership for peace

The next step was the announcement of a new NATO format on 10–11 January 1994. According to the official press communique “NATO today launched an immediate and practical programme that will transform the relationship between NATO and participating states. This new programme goes beyond dialogue and cooperation to forge a real partnership – a Partnership for peace. We (ministers of member states) therefore invite the other states participating in the NACC and other CSCE countries able and willing to contribute to this programme, to join with us in this partnership. Active participation in the Partnership for peace will play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO”⁵. Then in 1995 Belarusian representative, minister of foreign affairs V. Senko signed the framework document of PfP.

According to this official agreement, the other states subscribing to this document will cooperate with NATO in pursuing facilitation of transparency in national defence planning and budgeting processes; ensuring democratic control of defence forces; maintenance of the capability and readiness to contribute, subject to constitutional considerations, to operations under the authority of the UN and (or) the responsibility of the CSCE; the development of cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training, and exercises in order to strengthen their ability to undertake missions in the fields of peace-keeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and others; the development, over the longer term, of forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance⁶.

The first step for subscribing states was to provide to the NATO authorities presentation documents identifying the long-term strategy to achieve the political goals of the partnership and the military and other assets that might be used for partnership activities. NATO will propose a programme of partnership exercises and other activities consistent with the partnership’s objec-

tives special for each state. Based on this programme and its presentation document, each subscribing state will develop with NATO an individual partnership programme⁷.

To assist and to control the process of elaboration of the Belarusian presentation document department head of defence policy and planning division W. Gerard visited Belarus in August 1995 and took part in working meeting with representatives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Belarus and Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus. Firstly, the general directions of multilateral interaction within North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) were enumerated including political consultations, regional security, strategic matters, conversion, and scientific cooperation. Belarus demonstrated interest in all spheres. Secondly, partner countries choose individual activities according to their ambitions and abilities. An Individual partnership and cooperation programme (previously called the Individual partnership programme) is then jointly developed and agreed between NATO and each partner country. These two-year programmes are drawn up from an extensive menu of activities, according to each country’s specific interests and needs. All partners have access to the partnership and cooperation menu, which comprises some 1 600 activities⁸.

The first IPP with Belarus was endorsed by the NATO Council in July 1997. Since then, the number of annual joint activities under the IPP has increased more than six-fold and now (2019) stands at around 125. For example, the participation of Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Belarus in IPP events was the following: in 1997 – 20 events, in 1998 – 25, in 1999 – 11 (suspension of interaction due to Kosovo crisis), in 2000 – 35, in 2001 – 52, in 2002 – 78⁹. Regular consultations are held with NATO international staff and international military staff on the IPP implementation assessment¹⁰.

⁵Partnership for peace: invitation [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110a.htm> (date of access: 01.02.2020).

⁶Partnership for peace: framework document [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110b.htm> (date of access: 01.02.2020).

⁷Ibid.

⁸О мерах, принимаемых правительством по расширению военного сотрудничества РБ с НАТО в рамках ПРМ // Нац. арх. Респ. Беларусь. Ф. 7. Оп. 18. Д. 167. Л. 50.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

Kosovo crisis and suspension of IPP

But the first IPP was temporarily suspended because of the Kosovo crisis, the Belarus – NATO relations were frozen. The high officials of the Republic of Belarus accused NATO of unsanctioned bombardments. First of all, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus called on NATO countries to abandon military intervention. On 14 October 1998, ministry released a statement, in which it was noted that “the use of force against a sovereign state without the sanction of the UN Security Council is a severe violation of the UN Charter, this step contradicts the fundamental principles of international relations and undermines the security and legal system on the European continent <...> NATO’s military intervention in the intra-state conflict not only does not eliminate its causes, but, on the contrary, deepens the confrontation between the parties in Kosovo”¹¹. On 20 February 1999, the President of the Republic of Belarus made a statement on the development of the situation around Kosovo. “The Republic of Belarus is closely following the development of the situation around the conflict in Kosovo and at the talks in Rambouillet on issues of its settlement. The main thing now is to preserve the negotiation process and prevent any actions that could put it at risk... The Republic of Belarus reaffirms the firmness of its position regarding the settlement of the Kosovo conflict, which should be based on unconditional respect for the sovereignty of Yugoslavia, its territorial integrity and the principle of non-use of force”¹² (hereinafter translated by O. Zh.). In connection with the launch of the NATO military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 24 March 1999, A. Lukashenko again issued a statement on the development of the situation around Yugoslavia, which was perceived in this country as a powerful psychological factor of moral support. “The Republic of Belarus with deep concern accepted the decision of the NATO leadership on the use of military force against sovereign Yugoslavia. The desire to resort to extreme and most counterproductive measures in resolving the crisis indicates the reluctance of the North Atlantic Alliance to use all available means for a peaceful resolution of the intra-Yugoslav conflict, which can only cause condemnation of the world community”¹³. Belarus consistently opposed the use of force in the conflict, spoke out against the military intervention of third countries in Yugoslavia.

So the Republic of Belarus being a partner country doesn’t have any influence on NATO policy. The

country tends to develop initiatives to strengthen the regional security system, to promote stability and to minimise the negative side effects of NATO actions in the region. NATO may be regarded as a relic because after USSR and Organisation of Warsaw Treaty dissolution it lost its original purpose.

The planning and review process (PARP) is a mechanism with the main task to develop the framework of military cooperation with NATO. Belarus joined it in 2004. Fulfillment of partnership goals, selected within PARP, allows gaining relevant experience in improving the training of the armed forces of Belarus, with the possible aim of enabling their participation in multinational peace operations. Within PARP, Belarus and NATO regularly exchange delegations in order to design partnership goals for the two-year period and to assess their implementation¹⁴.

Belarus regularly brings forward initiatives in order to deepen its cooperation with the alliance in responding to challenges and threats to international security. One more important direction within PfP is conducting joint exercises on operating in a radiological threat, given the unique experience gained by Belarus to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster; creation on the basis of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Belarus of a PfP training centre to train specialists in the field of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence; hosting the disaster response exercise organised by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). For example, the scenario for EADRCC exercise “SRBIJA 2018” provided an opportunity to practice international cooperation and strengthen the ability of teams from different nations to work effectively together across a wide range of relief operations. These included urban search and rescue, emergency medical teams, water rescue, as well as detection, protection, and decontamination teams. Contributions to the exercise consisted of emergency response teams, exercise planners, and evaluators. With around 2 000 personnel from 40 countries involved, it was the largest exercise organised by the EADRCC. Belarus also participated in this event (30 people and 8 units of equipment)¹⁵. In 2017 Belarus took part in exercise “Bosnia and Herzegovina 2017” including the field exercise and a training programme, a table top exercise and a virtual reality – command post exercise with the aim to train and exercise procedures for the local emergency management authority,

¹¹Документы о двусторонних отношениях Республики Беларусь с государствами югославского региона (соглашения, информация, запись бесед и др.) // Арх. М-ва иностр. дел Респ. Беларусь. Ф. 907. Оп. 2. Д. 1978.

¹²Заявления Президента Республики Беларусь от 20 февраля 1999 г. и от 24 марта 1999 г. о развитии ситуации вокруг Косово // Вестн. М-ва иностр. дел Респ. Беларусь. 1999. № 1. С. 26–28.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Belarus – NATO cooperation [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://mfa.gov.by/en/organizations/membership/list/c6eaf2b20c037582.html> (date of access: 01.02.2020).

¹⁵EADRCC consequence management field exercise “Srbia 2018” [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_152120.htm (date of access: 01.02.2020).

the UN model on-site operation co-ordination centre, the liaison officers, the on-site commanders as well as the team leaders of participating consequence management teams¹⁶.

Belarus has been actively engaged within the framework of the NATO **Science for peace and security (SPS) programme** since 1992. Since 2001, Belarus has received grant awards for about 40 cooperative activities under SPS. Areas of focus include telecommunications, Chernobyl-related risk assessment studies, and explosive material detection systems. Belarus has completed several activities with the SPS programme. The leading areas for cooperation have included security-related advanced technology, defence against CBRN, and environmental security. There are some examples of ongoing and completed projects under the framework of the NATO SPS programme in 2015¹⁷.

Nano-optics: principles enabling basic research and applications together with US scientists; fundamental and applied nanoelectromagnetics together with Italian colleagues; flood monitoring and forecasting in Pripyat river basin led by scientists from Belarus, Ukraine and Slovakia; biodetectors based on advanced microchips; radioactive contamination in the Polessie state radiation-ecological reserve (assessment and analysis), the notable project led by scientists and experts from Belarus, Ukraine and Norway¹⁸.

Recently Belarusian scientists and experts have discussed opportunities for cooperation through NATO's SPS programme during an information day held at the National Academy of Sciences in Minsk. Addressing participants, NATO assistant Secretary-General for emerging security challenges, A. Missiroli (he is the highest-ranking representative of the NATO Secretariat to visit Belarus in the last 27 years), noted that the benefits of scientific cooperation are shared among NATO and partner nations. He encouraged Belarus to further engage in NATO partnership activities and underlined SPS as "an excellent opportunity for Belarusian scientists

and experts to work alongside their peers from NATO and partner nations to deliver tangible, security-related results"¹⁹.

In his welcome address, Belarusian deputy minister of foreign affairs A. Dapkiunas emphasised the importance of the SPS programme as platform for non-military scientific cooperation. He further stressed that "the information day will give new impetus to cooperation in the scientific field between Belarus and NATO, its members and partner nations, and will contribute to bridge-building, strengthening mutual understanding and trust in the region"²⁰.

Moreover, A. Dapkiunas and A. Missiroli mentioned the gradual improvement of Belarus – NATO relations. Belarus' cooperation with NATO member states and partners in various fields was discussed, including fight against new challenges and threats such as terrorism. A. Dapkiunas stressed Belarus' readiness for a constructive dialogue and interaction with NATO on the basis of mutual respect and equality. The Belarusian diplomat also drew the NATO representative's attention to Belarus' initiatives in favor of creating a digital good neighbourhood belt and in favour of working out a declaration on the non-deployment of medium-range and shorter-range missiles in Europe. A. Dapkiunas mentioned the Belarusian proposals are meant to reduce confrontation, restore trust, and bolster friendly ties between countries²¹.

Public opinion. It can be concluded that NATO is often regarded as an opponent, seldom – as a threat, rare – as an ally. This can be confirmed by a number of data. According to national opinion polls conducted in 2000 34.4 % respondents considered NATO as a threat and in 2001 this number was 26.7 %. One more question that sounds interesting is about NATO expansion to the East: immediately after Poland joined NATO 47.7 % people were against further expansion (June 1999), later then 43.7 % in November 1999, 31.1 % in November 2000, 32.6 % in February 2001 [7].

The Belarusian state bodies and officials responsible for the realisation of Individual partnership programme

The primary role in the formation of Belarus – NATO relations from the Belarusian side belongs to the Secretariat of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus that is an interdepartmental body with a mandate to ensure the security of the Republic of Belarus.

It considers internal and external affairs of the state with regard to the interest of maintaining security and defence. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus is the major state republican body responsible for the elaboration and coordination of the strategy

¹⁶EADRC consequence management field exercise "Bosna i Hercegovina 2017" [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_140528.htm (date of access: 01.02.2020).

¹⁷Relations with Belarus [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49119.htm (date of access: 01.02.2020).

¹⁸Country flyer 2015, Belarus [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.nato.int/science/country-flyers/Belarus.pdf> (date of access: 01.02.2020).

¹⁹NATO promotes scientific cooperation with Belarus [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_169739.htm?selectedLocale=en (date of access: 01.02.2020).

²⁰Об участии заместителя министра иностранных дел А. Дапкюнаса в открытии информационного дня НАТО и встрече с заместителем Генерального секретаря НАТО [Электронный ресурс]. URL: http://mfa.gov.by/press/news_mfa/b14224ef64e9-7089.html (дата обращения: 01.02.2020).

²¹Ibid.

and general directions of foreign policy. Its mission is to promote the rights and interests of the Republic of Belarus on the international arena, negotiate with the representatives of foreign countries, international organisations and intergovernmental institutions. The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Belarus is responsible for military policy of Belarus that is an important element of national and foreign policy activities aimed at the country's national security protection, war and armed conflicts prevention and strengthening of strategic stability. Military policy is determined according to the country's national interests and military, economic, social and diplomatic potential.

Taking into account these competences of responsible bodies we should mention the conceptual documents as the Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus adopted in 2010 (the first versions in 1995 and 2001)²², the Military doctrine of the Republic of Belarus of 2016 (previous in 2002)²³ and the law on main directions of internal and foreign policy of 2005²⁴. The strategic aspects are also stated in numerous presidential statements, addresses to parliament, official declarations, etc. But these documents are more theoretical and rhetorical.

From the NATO side the major bodies responsible for organising and implementing PfP are Political Committee and International Secretariat.

The new form of interaction is consultations on confidence and security building measures. From 2015 there were 4 rounds of consultations between Belarus and NATO experts on confidence and security-building measures. The latest was in February 2020. Belarusian state is represented by the deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Belarus, A. Dapkiunas, the counterpart is the director of the arms control, disarmament and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) non-proliferation centre of the NATO International Secretariat, W. Alberque. Usually both sides exchanged views on the possibilities for further development of mutually beneficial cooperation, discussed a number of topical issues of international and regional security, non-proliferation and arms control. A. Dapkiunas emphasised the importance of deepening a mutually respectful dialogue between Belarus, the NATO Secretariat and NATO allies on confidence- and security-building measures to gradually reduce confrontation and create favourable conditions for practical work to restore the viability of arms control and WMD non-proliferation mechanisms²⁵.

In 2019 the traditional international seminar "NATO and international security" under the aegis of the Centre of foreign policy and Security research centre was held and the great fruitful discussion was on the role of NATO and its relations with Eastern European countries. According to words of V. Bespaly, senior counselor of the State Secretariat of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus there are negative tendencies in international relations today: destruction of short and medium range missiles' treaty, indefinite situation with Strategic arms reduction treaty, international military capacity building. The jubilee NATO summit in London demonstrated the controversies within the alliance members. The Republic of Belarus initiates the creation of good neighbourhood belt, issues declaration of responsible countries.

In M. Huterer's opinion, Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Belarus (that is now NATO contact embassy in Belarus), the international political situation today becomes dangerous. Security and arms control architecture has been damaged including cornerstone of European security, strategic nuclear weapons treaty. The NATO members and partners express mutual understanding of this problem and should take care of it.

According to words of V. Pavlov, head of department of international security and arms control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, there is the accusing rhetoric in political dialogue and confrontation replaces confidence. In a word there is the constant increase of scale of military exercises but Belarus is against additional militarisation in the region, we are monitoring the NATO preparations for exercise "Defender-2020" and waiting for invitation (as response to exercises "Zapad-2017"). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus hopes to have open and sincere dialogue with the Russian Federation and NATO.

However, P. Lunac, head of NATO public diplomacy department, specifies Belarus – NATO relations since 1995 and underlines the willing to go step by step on the way to dialogue on substantial issues and practical cooperation. He pays attention to science based achievements, to gradual process of interaction, that Belarus does not contribute to NATO peacemaking operations. Let's hope that the abovementioned difficulties can be easily overcome and in the nearest future the Belarus – NATO interaction will be more stable and fruitful.

²²Об утверждении Концепции национальной безопасности Республики Беларусь : Указ Президента Респ. Беларусь от 9 нояб. 2010 г. № 575 [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=p31000575> (дата обращения: 01.02.2020).

²³Об утверждении Военной доктрины Республики Беларусь : Закон Респ. Беларусь от 20 июля 2016 г. № 412-3 [Электронный ресурс]. URL: https://www.pravo.by/upload/docs/op/h11600412_1469480400.pdf (дата обращения: 01.02.2020).

²⁴Об утверждении основных направлений внутренней и внешней политики Республики Беларусь : Закон Респ. Беларусь от 14 нояб. 2005 г. № 60-3 [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=h10500060> (дата обращения: 01.02.2020).

²⁵Deputy minister of foreign affairs A. Dapkiunas meets the director of the arms control, disarmament, and WMD non-proliferation centre of the NATO International Secretariat [Electronic resource]. URL: http://mfa.gov.by/en/press/news_mfa/ac2064ace2f4d44a.html (date of access: 01.02.2020).

Conclusion

Interaction with NATO is one of directions of Belarusian multivector foreign policy through which Belarusian side tries to ensure security on western frontiers, on the one hand, and increase its own importance in alliance with the Russian Federation on the other hand. The NATO security infrastructure is approaching to Belarusian borders and bilateral interaction with NATO member states (Lithuania, Latvia, Poland) is the element of Belarusian security policy, one should not underestimate the role of NATO in the context of regional security and the Union State with the Russian Federation. After Belarus joined NACC in 1992 the relations with NATO have gradually developed, the process was difficult and it is possible to

highlight several crises, periods of frozen contacts, decline of high level political relations, etc. However, there is one permanent form of interaction throughout 25 years (contact embassy on the basis of embassy of NATO member state) that performs logistic and intermediary functions.

But the bulk of beneficial cooperation is realised via IPP within PfP. There are two major directions within IPP: military and non-military which have a lot of spheres of cooperation. For example, science for peace and security; dealing with emergency situations (EADRCC); medical training; language courses and international exchange, seminars. The perspective of Belarus – NATO relations are unclear nowadays.

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